Abstract

Objective. Comparing the scores of quality of life according to place of residence (urban and rural areas). Methods. A cross-sectional study involving 2142 elderly in urban area and other 850 in rural area of the municipality of Uberaba (Minas Gerais, Brazil). Instruments used: Olders Americans Resources and Services, World Health Organization Quality of Life - BREF (WHOQOL-BREF) and World Health Organization Quality of Life Assessment for Older Adults (WHOQOL-OLD). Results. We found that in urban area predominated women and men in rural areas. It was common in two areas: 60-70 years old, married marital status, schooling of 4 to 8 years of study and the income of a minimum wage. The elderly residing in the urban area with their children and in rural areas did so with the spouse. In the evaluation of the quality of life, rural elders presented scores significantly higher than the urban area in the domains of physical, psychological, and social relations in the WHOQOL-BREF; and in the facets of autonomy, past, present and future activities, social participation and intimacy of the WHOQOL-OLD. For the latter instrument facets sensory ability and of death and dying the elderly’s urban area had higher scores than the rural area. Conclusion. The elders of the urban area showed a greater involvement of the quality of life than the residents in the rural area. Nurses who work in primary care should address health strategies according to the specific needs of the urban and rural areas.

Keywords
Key words, quality of life, health of the elderly, rural health, urban health.